



Happy Holidays from RDA! Wishing you good health & sustainable happiness!

photo courtesy of Richard Karp

Greetings!

Anyone with their eye on events in the gas drilling arena has already heard the big news out of New York state this week: Governor Cuomo declared a moratorium on unconventional gas drilling! His decision was based on scientifically-validated concerns for the health of NY citizens. RDA applauds this historic and courageous decision by an elected official willing to put people and the planet above corporate profits. We also applaud the tireless efforts of our friends and allies in the Empire state, whose diligence, persistence, and participation in the democratic process made this moratorium possible. [Click to read more.](#)

The feature story in RDA's December 4th issue of this newsletter, [which can be accessed by clicking here](#), was an article about the TLC gas wells on Yeagle Road. The article kicked off a flurry of favorable responses, as well as comments from industry supporters. As the story's author, I was initially disheartened to read the opening salvo on the RDA Facebook page, a post from from a reader who had obviously missed the entire point of the article.

The central theme of the story was the carefully controlled and exceedingly out-of-balance public message (and thus public perception)

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In Other News

Theo Colborn, 1927 - 2014

concerning unconventional gas drilling. The point of the story was backed up with examples, most notably the fact that Williamsport's Community Arts Center is no longer available for rent to RDA to show documentary films that examine the downside and risks of unconventional gas drilling.

I didn't jump into the Facebook debate that followed this comment: *"Typical 'not in my back yard' article. Don't want gas drilling? Don't use anything provided by it and you'll be very surprised on how much you will not have. Probably the same people that don't want coal, oil, nuclear or anything else except energy that magically appears at their doorstep by fairies with smiles on their faces."*

At first, I was disheartened that the respondent missed the entire point of the story, but after ruminating on it, I realize that this comment doesn't miss the article's point at all; it proves it. The NIMBY accusation is the well-known and increasingly ridiculed acronym for "Not In My Backyard." The allegation that RDA members are NIMBYists (translation: narrow-minded, unthinking, naive, and self-centered individuals with no interest beyond our own backyards) is one of the many false charges critical to the success of the pro-industry media hype and subsequent lack of public understanding that the article was written to address. This respondent missed the entire point of the text because he, like others, has swallowed an overdose of the all-too-available industry kool-aid.

Like-minded citizens who champion the development of a national energy policy that moves us toward a sustainable future are the most well-informed and least likely group of folks to ever be accused of thinking energy is magically delivered by fairies. The industry would like you to believe that opposition to rampant unconventional gas and infrastructure development is unpatriotic and NIMBY. The Facebook post was more evidence that this ploy of dismissing our concerns as the rants of emotional, self-serving NIMBYists is alive and well.

I believe it's time we reclaim the acronym to mean ***Neighbors In Many Backyards***, and proudly proclaim its truth.

Here in Lycoming County, and in many places in America and around the world, there is a growing number and unity of purpose among those who are exceedingly well informed concerning the role and application of fossil fuels throughout our entire and exceedingly complex global economy.

Neighbors In Many Backyards are getting together, talking and studying, attending township meetings, filing lawsuits, and participating in the democratic process. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* are voting to enact moratoriums and to keep gas development away from schools and nursing homes and other places where the most vulnerable populations are exposed. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* are filming and reporting the damages and violations that are a daily occurrence on well pads and compressor stations, but rarely make headlines in mainstream media. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* are gathering across the globe to demand that world leaders address the critical issue of climate change. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* have come to realize the claims of the industry regarding its safety record and environmental stewardship are blatantly false. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* are working tirelessly to ensure that the truth is told.

Neighbors In Many Backyards fought for and won a moratorium on unconventional drilling in New York state. *Neighbors In Many Backyards* have written a letter to Governor-elect Wolf challenging the validity of the CCSD Performance Standards; you'll read about that effort in an article below.



She was a brilliant scientist, a true visionary, an American hero, and an outspoken expert on the dangers of unconventional gas drilling.

"Thea's visionary leadership and passion shone most brilliantly when she made direct connections between new ideas, scientists whose work confirmed them, impacted individuals, and people in positions to change what needed changing. She will be remembered for many generations to come, generations that she worked tirelessly to protect."

Health Worries Pervade North Texas Fracking Zone

Propped up in a hospital bed, Taylor Ishee listened as his mother shared a conviction that choked her up. His rare cancer had a cause, she believes, and it wasn't genetics.

Others in Texas have drawn the same conclusions about their confounding illnesses: Jana DeGrand, who suffered a heart attack and needed both her gallbladder and her appendix removed; Rebecca Williams, fighting off unexplained rashes, sharp headaches and repeated bouts of pneumonia; Mailie Bush, who needed surgery for a sinus infection four rounds of antibiotics couldn't heal; and Annette Wilkes, whose own severe sinus infections were followed by two autoimmune diseases.

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

PA Ecosystem Fights Corporation for Rights in Landmark Fracking Lawsuit

For the first time in United States history, an ecosystem - a watershed, to be exact - has filed to defend itself in a lawsuit. The suit aims to reverse a local ban on the injection of fracking wastewater.

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

And finally, *Neighbors In Many Backyards*, including experts in the fields of science and medicine, have just completed and published a meta-analysis of over 400 studies on unconventional gas drilling. They have concluded, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the technology as it is currently practiced poses a serious threat to both human and environmental health. "The longer we look at fracking, the more trouble we find. There is no split debate within scientific literature, given the avalanche of recent studies showing inherent problems and harms..." writes Dr. Larysa Dyrszka, MD, one of the researchers on the project. You'll read more about this research report in this week's feature article, below.

Neighbors In Many Backyards are also looking beyond health and environmental concerns and exposing the myth that natural gas is the proverbial goose that laid the golden egg for local and national economies. The global movement underway is growing faster than any other in history, now spanning 697 campaigns worldwide, calling on universities, religious institutions, cities, and states to stop investing in the fossil fuel industry. Stanford University, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 34 cities, and the World Council of Churches - representing over half a billion members - are among the 700 investors worth more than \$50 billion, who have already committed to going fossil-free. Norway is considering divesting the country's \$840 billion sovereign wealth fund, and the current negotiating text of the U.N. climate agreement includes a call for divestment. [Click for more info.](#)

I am honored to be a member of the RDA Board of Directors. I'm grateful for each and every member of this organization, and for the membership renewals and donations we've received as we approach the New Year. I'm thankful for the talents and generosity and tireless hours invested in the RDA mission by those who are both genuinely patriotic, and profoundly concerned for the health and well being of their families, friends, neighbors, and kindred spirits around the globe - both now and in generations to come.

We are *Neighbors In Many Backyards*, and our voice is growing.

Will you stand with us and be counted?

I invite you to become one of many *Neighbors In Many Backyards*...join RDA, and speak with us in the coming New Year.

Peace and Goodwill,

Barb Jarmoska

Visit our website at: www.rdapa.org

Public Health Hazards and Risks

Experts in the fields of science and medicine have completed an analysis of over 400 studies on unconventional gas drilling.

They have concluded, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the process of unconventional gas drilling poses a serious threat to both human and environmental health. Of note in their review:

- 96% of all papers published on health impacts indicate potential risks or adverse health outcomes.
- 87% of original research studies published on health outcomes indicate potential risks or adverse health outcomes.

Protect Our Public Lands from Fracking

Representative Mark Pocan (WI-2) recently introduced a bill to ban fracking on all public lands - the strongest piece of federal legislation against fracking to date. Fracking on public lands means clear-cutting forests for well pads, air pollution, potential water contamination and thousands of trucks carrying water, toxic chemicals and waste.

Our US parks and national forests are irreplaceable. Not only do they provide beautiful recreational areas and essential wildlife habitat, they also protect critical drinking water sources.

[Click here to sign a petition asking your Representative to support a ban on fracking on public lands.](#) We'll deliver your signature and additional message directly to your elected official.

Clean Air Council's Map of Shale Gas Infrastructure

The Clean Air Council's new shale gas infrastructure map will make it easy for residents who live near shale gas infrastructure in Pennsylvania to view nearby facilities as well as report pollution problems directly to state and federal environmental agencies. [The map is now available online.](#)

Using the map, members of the public can see compressor stations, dehydration stations, gas processing plants, natural gas liquid pumping stations, power plants, and pipelines in the state. They can also report pollution issues from nearby facilities directly to regulatory agencies - including the DEP and the US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry - by filling out some basic information about the problem they are experiencing.

[Click here to view the map of natural gas infrastructure in PA or to report any pollution that may have occurred.](#)

Say No to the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline

The proposed Atlantic Sunrise pipeline would span 178 miles through eight counties in

- 95% of all original research studies on air quality indicate elevated concentrations of air pollutants.
- 72% of original research studies on water quality indicate potential, positive association, or actual incidence of water contamination.
- There is an ongoing expansion in the number of peer-reviewed publications on the impacts of shale and tight gas development: approximately 73% of all available scientific peer-reviewed papers have been published in the past 24 months, with a current average of one paper published each day.

Anthony Ingraffea, PhD, Dwight C. Baum Professor of Engineering, Cornell University, said, "In 2009, when New York State first declared a moratorium on fracking, only six peer-reviewed papers on the health and environmental impacts had been published. Now there are more than 400, and the vast majority shows a clear and present danger. What's more, many problems are unfixable by regulations of any kind. It was a wise governor who said 'wait' in 2009. And it is wise to continue to wait."

Fully referenced with well over four hundred citations, the Compendium covers sixteen compelling topics that emerge in reviewing the data, opening with sections on two of the most acute threats-air pollution and water contamination-and ending with medical and scientific calls for more study and transparency.

[Click here to be redirected to the Concerned Health Professionals of New York's page.](#)

Unsafe & Unsustainable

Experts review the Center for Sustainable Shale Development's Performance Standards for Shale Gas Development

The [Performance Standards](#) reviewed in a new report were issued in August 2013 by the CSSD, a nonprofit partnership of drilling interests. The CSSD asserts shale gas extraction can be undertaken safely if done in compliance with its Performance Standards. The CSSD has gone so far as to suggest that, if implemented, its Performance Standards would achieve "safe, sustainable shale resource development."

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network calls that into question in a new report released just last week. The report also provides a discussion of the better energy path that is available for fueling our region and country, drawing upon the writings of Dr. Mark Jacobson. [Click here to read the full report.](#)

The organization sent a letter to Governor-elect Tom Wolf along with the report, stating "As you think about the kind of leadership you want to demonstrate for Pennsylvania and the nation, we encourage you to carefully consider the scientific evidence relating to shale gas development. There is a lot of industry information and politically motivated information that is being advanced and it is important not to be distracted by the path of least resistance versus the path of what is right and scientifically defensible... we share with you the attached report which includes a series of analyses by experts in a variety of relevant fields that document and demonstrate why the CSSD Performance Standards are not worthy of your attention or support. [Click here to view the entire letter to our new Governor.](#)

Pennsylvania. If approved, it would directly impact the lives of thousands of people living in these communities.

The proposed Atlantic Sunrise pipeline would span 178 miles through eight counties in PA. If approved, it would directly impact the lives of thousands of people living in these communities.

According to the Wall Street Journal, 1400 pipeline spills, accidents, and significant incidents including explosions and death, occurred in the US from 2010 to 2013. This amounts to an average of one incident per day. No area with a pipeline is immune to damage. Living in PA, we already know the daily reality of pipeline leaks and explosions from living in the shale gas era. Williams Company would gain economic benefit while residents along the proposed right of way would bear the burdens.

Help protect PA from the construction of this damaging pipeline. By signing this petition, you are urging the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and PA elected officials to deny the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline and to instead protect PA homes, farms & natural areas.

[Click here to sign the petition.](#)

NPR Petition

Think About It

Most Americans consider NPR an independent media organization, so it might surprise you that one of its biggest corporate sponsors is the American Natural Gas Alliance, a front group that exists only to promote some of the worst energy polluters in America.

The ANGA has been an NPR corporate sponsor for months, using its airtime to promote the misleading 'think about it' campaign that is in fact a promotion for the dangerous and destructive drilling process known as fracking.

NPR's financial dependence on the fracking industry could be fouling its news coverage, just like fracking fouls up our air, water and climate. Fracking puts America on a path toward a bleak energy future, with polluted land, flammable tap water and earthquakes.

Meanwhile, clean, green energy sources like wind and solar can provide 99 percent of our electric, transportation and manufacturing

Join us as we enter into 2015!

RDA is incredibly grateful for the outpouring of support since the last newsletter! Welcome new members & thank you so much for your contributions.

RDA is an alliance of concerned citizens and community leaders. We are pleased to welcome all who care about the personal, environmental and economic health of Pennsylvania, both now and for generations to come. We invite you to join us, and would like to introduce you to our seven-member Board of Directors:

Jim Slotterback, President - As an Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for Williamsport's local health system, Jim has been serving his community as a paramedic for over 25 years. He's seen first-hand the devastating effects of climate change in his response to Hurricane Lee in 2011 and Hurricane Gustav, Louisiana in 2008. Born and raised in New Jersey, Jim has a B.S. in Applied Health. He moved to Williamsport to attend paramedic school, and the rugged terrain, diverse landscapes, pristine streams, and love of adventuring led him to make Lycoming County his home. In 2010, Jim and his wife Jenni enlisted the help of RDA to launch a campaign to save Rider Park, a local public park/nature preserve from gas drilling. They reached out to the community via radio, television, and newspaper; in less than two weeks, they gathered over 4,000 petition signatures. Their tireless work paid off and the owners of the park voted against signing a surface mineral lease. [Click here to see Earth Justice's short film about the Slotterbacks' effort to save Rider Park.](#)

Robert (Robbie) Cross, Vice President - Robbie is a founding member of RDA and served as President from March, 2013 through October, 2014. An active outdoors person from childhood, Robert has hiked in the Alps and Copper Canyon, Mexico, and has summited both Mt. Washington and Mt. Katahdin multiple times in the winter. He has hiked most of the major trails in northcentral PA and paddled many of the state's navigable streams. A graduate of Lycoming College with a B.S. in sociology, Robbie spent his first post-college year working for public assistance in Harlem, NYC. Moving to Williamsport, PA to marry and raise a family, he began working in the rugged outdoor business and in 1985 started Equinox, Ltd, a company now in its 29th year. Today, Equinox is located in Williamsport where it builds packs, sleeping bags and other gear distributed across America, to Europe and Japan. In addition to RDA, Robbie is a board member of a multi-county organization that oversees Head Start, Office of the Aging and other community services. He is also an active member of the Lycoming County Democratic Executive Committee.

Barbara Jarmoska, Treasurer - A lifelong environmental activist, teacher, business owner, wellness consultant, and writer, Barb is the founder of Freshlife, a natural products supermarket in Williamsport. She lives along the Loyalsock Creek, on 20 unleased acres in the Loyalsock State Forest region of northcentral PA. Within her own Gamble Township and the three surrounding townships, a total of 209 gas wells are now permitted, validating the name "Marcellus Sacrifice Zone" that has been given to the area. With the help of three professional photographers, Barb developed dual pictorial Power Point presentations that tell the story of the industrialization of Pennsylvania by multi-national energy corporations. These talks, entitled "Guinea Pigs Atop the Marcellus" and "Unconventional Gas Drilling and Quality of Life" have been presented in two states to hundreds of viewers at colleges, universities, civic groups, environmental organizations and public meetings.

power needs. No fracking required. Even better every time we choose renewable energy over oil, coal and gas, we reduce emissions, lower the cost of energy and create jobs.

When trusted news outlets like NPR take money from ANGA and repeat their deceptive marketing claptrap - on OUR airwaves - we have to question their objectivity.

[Sign up here to tell NPR that when it comes to fracking, don't even think about it.](#)

Frack Free Parks

The Campaign Continues

It's not too late to participate in the "Frack Free Parks" campaign initiated by the Save the Loyalsock Coalition. Take a "selfie" in the woods with [THIS SIGN](#) and email it to frackfreeparks@gmail.com so they can upload it to the tumblr site. Then feel free to share it all over your other social media.



[Click here for more information](#)

Protect Colorado's Wilderness from Fracking

The Obama Administration is finalizing plans for 1.5 million acres of public land in Colorado, including more than 300,000 acres of our last wild places.

The administration is poised to hand over these lands to oil and gas companies to expand dangerous fracking operations. If frackers turn these wild places into an industrial landscape, the damage would be irreversible.

These lands are beloved by Americans for camping, hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing and more. They provide important habitat for countless species, including moose, elk, deer, lynx, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, mountain lions and sage grouse.

Colorado has already become a poster child for the perils of fracking,

Jennifer Slotterback, Secretary - Dr. Slotterback practices veterinary medicine at a local clinic providing health and wellness care to dogs and cats and education and advice to their owners. She received both her B.S. in Nursing and her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Michigan State University. A lifelong hiker, conservationist, and observer of nature, Jenni helps to plan and lead RDA's Keep it Wild hikes, raising awareness and strengthening advocacy for PA's public lands. Jenni completed the Pennsylvania Planning Education Institute course in community planning to better understand local zoning ordinances and their role in unconventional gas development. Jenni and her husband, Jim, live in Hepburn Township, Lycoming County - less than a mile from the site of the first proposed well pad site in the township. They are currently playing an active role in empowering their neighbors to bring questions and concerns about unconventional gas development to local township supervisors.

Mark Szybist - A practicing attorney since 2004, Mark has practiced environmental law in PA since 2010, focusing on a wide range of unconventional gas development issues, from storm water runoff to air pollution, and from compressor stations to zoning issues. He is familiar with most major federal and state environmental laws governing gas development activities in Pennsylvania, and is currently litigating cases under the federal Clean Air Act, the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law, and the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code. This litigation includes *Gorsline v. Fairfield Township* and *Inflection Energy, a Lycoming County zoning appeal* considered an early test of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Robinson Township and Delaware Riverkeeper Network v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, which breathed new life into Article I, Section 27 of PA's constitution, the so-called environmental rights amendment. Mark joined RDA in 2009 and has been on the Board of Directors since 2010.

Roscoe McCloskey - Roscoe is a self-proclaimed, budding environmentalist. Having spent most of his life in Pennsylvania, he came to take for granted the beauty and wild aspects of the state. With the recent, brutal and swift attack by the gas industry on PA's natural wonders, Roscoe found himself at odds with local, state and federal laws, corporations he previously did not take time to consider, as well as many friends, neighbors, and family members. The gas invasion has brought Roscoe a new appreciation for treasures he never realized he held so dear. Roscoe has a B.A. in history from Lycoming College in Williamsport. He is an avid hiker, and is often found kayaking the local waterways in the warmer seasons. Never without his faithful companion, Gemo the Rottweiler, Roscoe enjoys all things outdoors. He is currently the business development manager for an architectural sales firm in Lycoming County, and previously worked in the fields of education, juvenile rehabilitation, and sales. Roscoe's future plans include helping to create a more sustainable energy future in both the construction and operation of commercial and residential buildings.

Dianne Peeling - With degrees from Drew and Columbia Universities, Dianne has taught in the New York City, Muncy, and Warrior Run school systems and at the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport. Currently she is a professional tutor in Penn College's Writing Center. A musician, she is actively involved with administration of the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra and the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble. From 1989 - 2003, Dianne was an elected supervisor for Gregg Township in Union County and served on affiliated county boards. A member of the Host Community Action Committee from 1990 - 1994, she was active in the successful campaign to prevent USPCI's construction of a hazardous waste incinerator in Gregg Township. A lifelong sailor, Dianne makes frequent use of PA (and other states') waters. Dianne has been a member of RDA since 2010 and recently joined its Board of Directors.

with hundreds of occurrences of toxic waste spills, groundwater and river contamination and other ill effects being reported.

[Click here to urge the BLM to safeguard our public lands from reckless fracking in its final plans for Colorado.](#)

Fracktracker iPhone App

Fracktracker Alliance recently released a free iPhone app - designed to collect and share experiences related to oil and gas drilling across the United States. The app allows people to submit oil & gas photos or reports. Users can view a map of wells drilled near them as well as user-submitted data.

[Click here for more details.](#)

Join RDA!

Sign Up/Make a Donation

We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special events, publicity, research and other projects.

It costs nothing to sign up for our e-newsletter, but tax-free donations are accepted & greatly appreciated.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RDA relies on donations for the important work we do. In order for RDA to continue its valuable education and advocacy outreach in 2015, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

You can send a donation to the address listed at the bottom of this email, [click here to donate via PayPal](#), or [click here to download our current membership form](#) to fill out and send in along with your donation.

Membership levels:
Adventurer.....\$10
Explorer.....\$20
Woodlander.....\$50
Guardian.....\$100
Naturalist.....\$500
Preservationist.....\$1,000

www.RDAPA.org

Past Newsletters

[Click here to access our newsletter archive.](#)

Because RDA is a non-profit organization, we rely on grants and community donations for the important work we do. In order to continue our valuable education and advocacy outreach in 2015, we need your help. Please join us in fighting this good fight by making a year-end, tax-deductible donation and becoming a member/renewing your membership for the upcoming year. You can donate via PayPal by [CLICKING HERE](#). Or if you would prefer to mail in your donation, you can [CLICK HERE](#) to print the membership form, fill it out & send it in along with your check made out to RDA (if printing is an issue, feel free to send a note with the requested information instead.) Membership forms can be mailed to RDA, PO Box 502, Williamsport, PA 17703. We also welcome your active participation and assistance in our endeavors.

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

If you missed the article in last week's issue, [click here to read more about RDA & our accomplishments throughout the past year](#). Even if you're not in a position to make a donation at this time, there is plenty you can do to join us in helping to control the industrialization of rural PA. [Click here to learn more](#).

The gas industry is only gaining speed in Pennsylvania as time goes on, so NOW is truly the time to get involved & be a part of the solution. It is up to us, the citizens of this beautiful state to speak up and fight for local zoning control and tighter environmental regulations in order to protect and preserve the home that we all share, love and cherish. Please join us!

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RDA Newsletter

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Roscoe McCloskey - RDA Board of Directors
Dianne Peeling - RDA Board of Directors



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Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

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